Remarks

The Office Action dated June 25, 2007, has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment and following remarks have been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-22 and 24-33 are pending in this application. Claims 1-22 and 24-33 are rejected. Claim 23 is canceled. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that the pending Claims define allowable subject matter.

Turning to the prior art rejections, Claims 1, 4-7 and 10-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kittross et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,681,351), hereinafter "Kittross" in view of Mutchler et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,689,157), hereinafter "Mutchler". Claims 2, 3, 8, and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kittross in view of Mutchler and further in view of Proskauer (U.S. Patent No. 5,828,674), hereafter "Proskauer". Claims 13 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kittross in view of Mutchler and further in view of Blitz (U.S. Patent No. 6,047,293), hereinafter "Blitz". Claims 15-22, 24, 25, 28, 29, 32, and 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kittross in view of Proskauer. Claims 26, 27, 30, and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kittross in view of Proskauer and further in view of Blitz. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for reasons set forth hereafter.

Claim 1, as amended, recites a method for distributing software components to a plurality of computer stations that each analyze products. The method includes accessing a test management system that is located remotely from the computer stations, the test management system storing a plurality of software components, obtaining at least one of the software components that includes information used by a computer station which communicates with a test station to analyze a product; and distributing the software component from the test management system to the computer station automatically based on at least one of an identification of the test station and an identification of the product.

Kittross describes a test procedure for testing a device using automatic test equipment (ATE) 20. The ATE system 20 includes a memory 22 having the test procedures 40 stored therein, a test interface 28 to connect to and test the devices 46, and a processor 26 coupled to the

memory 22 for executing the test procedures 40 using the test interface 28. In use, Kittross further describes that a user creates a test procedure from test elements stored in a test element database 36 located locally within memory 22 of ATE system 20. The completed test procedure is then stored within the memory 22 of ATE 20. On page 3 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Kittross discloses "a method for distributing software components to computer stations that analyze products (abstract)". However, Kittross describes a method of transmitting test procedures from the test element database to the local memory, each of which is located in the same ATE. As such, Kittross does not describe a method for distributing software components from a test management system that is located remotely from the computer station automatically. Additionally, as admitted on page 3 of the outstanding Office Action, Kittross does not describe or suggest distributing the software component to the computer station based on at least one of an identification of the test station and an identification of the product.

Mutchler describes a method of installing and configuring a test suite for a unit under test (UUT) in an automated assembly process. A user inputs an identifier into the UUT. The identifier, such as a serial number, corresponds to the UUT. The identifier is received by a test suite server 130 that retrieves a Bill of Materials corresponding to the UUT from an IT server 140. Test files and other files specific to the Bill of Materials are then generated by the test suite server 130 and copied to the UUT. The UUT is then tested using the test files and other files, which constitute the test suite. Accordingly, Mutchler does not describe or suggest distributing a software component from a test management system to a computer station which communicates with a test station that is used to analyze a product. Rather, Mutchler describes distributing a software component (the test suite) directly into the product being tested (the UUT), i.e. directly from the file server into the product which performs a self test. Thus Mutchler does not describe a test station used to analyze the UUT.

Proskauer describes a test system that includes a PC workstation 2000, a tester 2002, and a semiconductor handler 2004. The workstation 2000 includes an operator controls section 2022 that is installed within workstation 2000 and is loaded with a library of handler drivers. During use, an operator selects a handler from a menu of available handler drivers that are installed on the local workstation, connects it, and enables it. As such, Proskauer does not describe a method for distributing software components from a test management system that is located remotely

from the computer station automatically based on at least one of an identification of the test station and an identification of the product as recited in Claim 1. Rather, Proskauer describes that the handler drivers are installed in the operator controls section 2022 located within workstation 2000.

Blitz describes a semiconductor test system in which a spreadsheet workbook has one or more spreadsheets containing nested levels of name device parameter data. Blitz, like Proskauer describes that the handler drives are installed in the operator controls section 2022 located within workstation 2000. As such, Blitz does not describe a method for distributing software components from a test management system that is located remotely from the computer station automatically based on at least one of an identification of the test station and an identification of the product as recited in Claim 1.

None of Mutchler, Proskauer, or Blitz make up for the deficiencies of Kittross with respect to Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 2-14 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-14 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent Claim 1, dependent Claims 2-14 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 2-14 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

Claim 15, as amended, recites a management system database configured to be used with a computer station that operates an instrument when analyzing a product, wherein the database stores software components that are configured to be executed by the computer station to communicate with and operate the instrument in order to analyze the product, the database is located remotely from the computer station and automatically accesses the software components based on identification of at least one of the computer station, the instrument and the product.

Kittross does not describe or suggest a management system database as recited in Claim 15. For example, Kittross does not describe or suggest that the management system database is located remotely from the computer station. Rather, Kittross describes a method of transmitting test procedures from the test element database to the local memory, wherein the database and the

local memory are each installed in the same ATE. Additionally, as admitted on page 11 of the outstanding Office Action, Kittross does not describe or suggest a database storing software components that are configured to be executed by a computer station to communicate with and operate an instrument in order to analyze a product, wherein the database automatically accesses the software components based on identification of at least one of the computer station, the instrument and the product.

Furthermore, as discussed above, Proskauer describes that workstation 2000 is loaded with a library of handler drivers. During use, an operator selects a handler from a menu of available handler drivers, connects it, and enables it. As such, Proskauer does not describe a management file server that is located remotely from the computer station that automatically accesses the software components from the management file server based on identification of at least one of the computer station, the instrument and the product. Rather, Proskauer describes that the handler drivers are installed in the operator controls section 2022 that is installed within workstation 2000.

As such, Proskauer does not make up for the deficiencies of Kittross with respect to Claim 15. Accordingly, Claim 15 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 16-20 depend from independent Claim 15. When the recitations of Claims 16-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent Claim 15, dependent Claims 16-20 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 16-20 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

Claim 21, as amended, recites a system comprising, among other things, a computer station configured to control operation of an instrument as the instrument analyzes a product, a test station communicating with the computer station and the instrument, and a management system database located remotely from the computer station and in communication with the computer station, wherein the database stores an equipment file set and the equipment file set includes a set of software components associated with the test station and independent of the product.

Neither Kittross nor Proskauer, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a system as recited in Claim 21. For example, neither Kittross nor Proskauer, considered alone or in combination, describe or suggest a computer station configured to control operation of an instrument as the instrument analyzes a product, a test station communicating with the computer station and the instrument, and a management system database in communication with the computer station, wherein the database stores an equipment file set that includes a set of software components associated with the test station and independent of the product.

As admitted on page 14 of the outstanding Office Action, Kittross does not describe or suggest an "equipment file set including a set of software components associated with said test station and independent of said product." Moreover, Kittross does not describe nor suggest that the management system database is located remotely from the computer station and in communication with the computer station. Rather, Kittross describes a method of transmitting test procedures from the test element database to the memory, each of which is located in the same ATE.

Proskauer describes a test system that includes a PC workstation 2000, a tester 2002, and a semiconductor handler 2004. However, the handler drivers discussed in Proskauer are stored within the PC workstation 2000, rather than a management database in communication with the PC workstation 2000. Specifically, the handler drivers are stored within either a production interface 2008 of the PC workstation 2000 or a test development and execution program 2010 of the PC workstation 2000. Accordingly, Proskauer does not describe or suggest a management system database that is located remotely from the computer station and in communication with a computer station, wherein the database stores an equipment file set that includes a set of software components associated with a test station and independent of a product. Because Kittross and Proskauer each fail to describe or suggest one or more elements of Claim 21, it follows that a combination of Kittross and Proskauer cannot describe or suggest such element(s).

Blitz, considered alone or in combination with Kittross and Proskauer, fails to make up for the deficiencies of Kittross and Proskauer with respect to Claim 21. Accordingly, Claim 21 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 22 and 24-27 depend from independent Claim 21. When the recitations of Claims 22 and 24-27 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent Claim 21, dependent Claims 22 and 24-27 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 22 and 24-27 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

Claim 28 recites a system for developing software components, wherein the system comprises a test station communicating with a computer station, and a source code control system permitting a user to develop software components that, when used by the computer station, directs the computer station to control an instrument during analysis of a product, wherein the source code control system is used to develop a relation between an identification of the test station and an identification of the product.

Kittross does not describe or suggest a system as recited in Claim 28. For example, Kittross does not describe or suggest a source code control system used to develop a relation between an identification of a test station and an identification of a product being analyzed. Rather, as discussed above, Kittross describes techniques for programming an ATE system 20 with different test procedures 40 for testing different devices 46, but is silent as to how the ATE system 20 selects or accesses which test procedure 40 is to be used to test a particular device 46. Accordingly, Kittross does not describe or suggest a source code control system used to develop a relation between an identification of a test station and an identification of a product being analyzed.

Moreover, Proskauer describes at pages col. 5 line 66- col. 6 lines 1-30 that the handler test control that is loaded into workstation 2000 is used to define the interface between the handler and the handler test control each of which is loaded into workstation 2000. As such, Proskauer does not describe that a source code control system is used to develop a relation between an identification of a test station and an identification of a product being analyzed. Rather, Proskauer is silent regarding the identification of the test station.

None of Mutchler, Proskauer, and Blitz, considered alone or in combination, make up for the deficiencies of Kittross with respect to Claim 28. Accordingly, Claim 28 is submitted to be patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons set forth above.

Claims 29-33 depend from independent Claim 28. When the recitations of Claims 29-33 are considered in combination with the recitations of independent Claim 28, dependent Claims 29-33 are likewise considered to be patentable over the cited art. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that dependent Claims 29-33 recite additional features that are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the prior art.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the Claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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